



Lambda Letters Project

October, 1993 Newsletter

6212 Silverton Way, Carmichael, California 95608

Phone (916) 965-6851

Lambda Letters Announces First Annual Membership Meeting

32553

Women's Issue

Nominations for Board Membership Being Accepted

Deadline for Nominations November 22, 1993

The Lambda Letters Project will hold its first annual membership meeting on Saturday January 22, 1994, in Sacramento. Please mark your calendars! The meeting site is still to be determined. The meeting agenda will include the election of members of the Board of Directors. At its last meeting, the current Board approved bylaws which call for these elections. The bylaws require that the corporation publish a list of all those submitting their names for election to the Board. The list must be published 30 days in advance of the meeting. In order to accomplish this, those wishing to have

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House Persuaded to Vote on Violence Against Women Act

The Violence Against Women Act, H.R. 1133, is currently in the House Committee on the Judiciary within the Subcommittee on Crime and Criminal Justice. Last year this bill was stalled in committee for the entire year and was not brought to a vote on the floor of the House. The bill has already passed through subcommittee in the Senate; certainly the House can do the same. Thus one of this month's letters is to persuade your Representative to bring H.R. 1133 before the House for a vote.

H.R. 1133 is a far-reaching set of bills designed to create safer places for women to live and work. It would create safer streets by authorizing grants to states and nonprofit, nongovernmental agencies for, among other things, sexual assault victim services programs and education and prevention programs to reduce the rate of violent crimes against women.

Among the bills contained in H.R. 1133 are the Safe Campuses Act, which directs the study of the scope of the problem of campus sexual assaults and the effectiveness of policies in protecting victims; and the Safe Homes for Women Act, which establishes grants to encourage arrest policies and improve judicial handling of domestic violence cases. The civil rights section (title) of H.R. 1133 declares that all individuals shall have the right to be free from crimes of violence motivated by the victim's gender. Individuals deprived of that right would be able to bring a civil action for compensatory damages and punitive damages. One of the

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NAACP Thanked

This month's Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual letter is directed to Dr. Benjamin Chavez, Executive Director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Under his leadership the Board of Directors and progressive chapter membership passed a resolution in April, 1993, to support efforts to end discrimination against gays and lesbians.

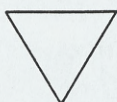
The organization has received a good deal of protest within its ranks, headed by the Concerned Citizens for Traditional Family Values and modeled on Lou Sheldon's Traditional Values Coalition.

It is important that the leadership and progressive majority of the NAACP know of our appreciation for their public stance against discrimination. The letter you'll be signing also emphasizes to the leadership that African-Americans and gay/lesbian/bisexual communities need to build a coalition against the rising incidents of hate crimes and organized white supremacist groups. We hope you'll join us in thanking the NAACP in recognizing the many faces of discrimination, and speaking out on our behalf.

On the local front, all of our Lambda Letters members may not be aware that the Sacramento office of the NAACP was firebombed on July 27th, and their subsequent office was vandalized shortly thereafter. Members who would like to send contributions to replace stolen or damaged office supplies should send a donation to the local Sacramento chapter of the NAACP at:

P.O. Box 188231
Sacramento, CA 95818

Address them to Dr. White, Director of the Sacramento Chapter. They would appreciate your support—and drop a note along to say that your support is lesbian, bisexual, or gay.



Entertainment '94 Sellers Needed

Book Sales Are Lagging

So far, we have sold about 90 entertainment books, far less than last year at this time. In 1992 we sold a total of 260 books, but this year we must sell 300 books statewide to provide needed financial support Lambda Letters Project.

LLP needs people to sell Entertainment '94 books in their community. Books are available for many communities across the state. We will pay \$1.00 per book for each book sold or give a free book to anyone who sells 11 books. Books can be sold to your friends and neighbors or to prospects using phone lists which we provide. If you are interested, please let us know by mail or by calling (916) 965-6851.

Entertainment books are a great way people that can support the Project and yet get something of great value for their contribution. Please help us and yourself by selling these excellent discount books for the Lambda Letters Project.

Violence Against Women Act

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most crucial components of the bill provides for equal justice for women in the courts. Past sexual behavior or evidence of what the victim was wearing will no longer be admissible in criminal court cases for sex offenses. Education and training for judges and court personnel will also be provided to alleviate gender bias in court proceedings and trial outcomes.

H.R. 1133 is badly needed when you consider the statistics of violence against women in this country. In 1990, 683,000 rapes were reported. This averages out to one rape every 46 seconds! The rate of rape per capita in the United States is eight times greater than in France, 15 times greater than in England, and 28 times greater than in Japan. Additionally, 1 out of 15 male college students have reported committing rape or attempting it. These

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Feinstein Requested to Help Thwart Overzealous FDA

In July of 1992 we wrote to Dr. David Kessler, the Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), urging that he stop his overzealous interpretation of the Nutrition Labeling and Enforcement Act of 1990 (NLEA 1990), as well as stop supporting legislation (S. 2135 & H.R. 3642) which would give the FDA more power and control over consumer access to vitamins, minerals, and food supplements, classifying many of them as food additives (chemicals to be regulated)—which means that they would be available only by prescription or not at all.

Unfortunately, Dr. Kessler, despite his positive actions on such things as "fast-tracking" access to experimental drugs for persons living with AIDS (PWAs), continues to be an over-eager enforcer of FDA restrictions on our access to vitamins, minerals, herbs, and amino acids.

Now the FDA has proposed regulations which would turn these restrictions into law in mid-December. These are products which humankind has been taking for ages; they are taken by many PWAs (as well as countless other ordinary citizens) without undue side effects and with the strong possibility of improving one's quality of life. The FDA is now concerned that proper safety and efficacy trials have not been conducted for these products.

Of course, there are frauds in the dietary health supplement industry, as there are in many areas, but this does not mean that the American public should be overprotected, have controlled access to products which they have been using for years, be required to pay more for these products, etc. The nutritional health, health food, and naturopathic healing communities have begun a nationwide campaign to influence the FDA to change their stance on these matters. It is important that those who are concerned with the

health and welfare of persons with HIV disease/AIDS add their voice to this mounting nationwide protest.

In order to counter the FDA's proposed regulations, which would take effect on December 31, 1993, Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT) has introduced S. 784, the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act of 1993. The bill's definition of dietary supplements approves any form unless it claims to be a replacement for food. Vitamins, minerals, and food supplements are *not* to be considered food additives. The bill also allows health claims and judicial review of FDA actions.

This bill already has considerable bipartisan support with 22 Democrat and 35 Republican co-sponsors; unfortunately even this majority of the Senate is not enough to assure the bill's final passage. California's own Senator Barbara Boxer joined the co-sponsors of S. 784 on September 23, and we at the Lambda Letters Project have already written her a thank-you letter.

This is a consumer-oriented bill and its passage is critical to the continued health and welfare of many Californians. Unfortunately, our other Senator, Dianne Feinstein, has not yet seen fit to sign on as a co-sponsor of the bill. As a leader in the Senate, her support would go a long way in encouraging other senators to vote for the bill as it winds its way through the obstacles to passage. Thus, this month, we are writing to Senator Feinstein, urging her to add her name to the list of co-sponsors and to work actively to ensure the passage of S. 784. (For a legislative update or more information call the National Health Alliance at 1-800-226-4NHA.)

Violence Against Women Act

Continued from p. 2

and other statistics are staggering and the impact for women, both physically and emotionally, is traumatic.

This collection of bills, the Violence Against Women Act, will begin to examine the roots of violence against women and take strides to address it. Please sign the enclosed letter to your Representative so it can be voted on and hopefully passed.

Membership Meeting

Continued from page 1

their names included in the list must submit their requests 60 days prior to the meeting. In this case, that means names must be received by Lambda Letters no later than November 22, 1993. If you wish to be considered for Board membership, please submit your name, address, and phone number by the deadline. *Note:* the bylaws do allow for the nomination of additional candidates at the membership meeting. Lambda Letters Project members will also have the right to vote on business that comes before the annual meeting.

A member is defined by the bylaws as any person who subscribes to the purposes of the Lambda Letters Project, Inc., and is a volunteer or contributor to the corporation or who is a letter writer in good standing (as established by the Board). A "letter writer" is a person who signs letters prepared by the project or composes original letters and submits them to the project for transmission to the addressee. Please submit your name, address, and phone number to us if you would like to serve on the Board of Directors and please plan to attend our annual meeting on January 22, 1994.

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Health Care Issue

What Should a New National Health Plan Include?

Recently, PBS called it "the most lobbied bill in history." We are referring to President Clinton's proposed new national health plan. This plan has major implications for each and every one of us, not just those living with AIDS or others who are ill. Some of the big questions being asked are what provisions will the bill have, how long will they take to phase in, what will be covered, what will deductibles and co-payments be, etc. There is a long laundry list of issues which a comprehensive national health bill should address. We have covered some of these issues in this month's letter to our members in the House of Representatives. We tried to be appropriately selective concerning the issues in our letter, and will undoubtedly be writing several times more on this bill and specific provisions in it before its final passage and enactment. Given the bill's complexity, we would appreciate and value receiving input from our members as to which specific health care issues we should focus on in our future letters.



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Congress Votes for Discrimination

The military appropriations bill now before Congress contains language stating that homosexuality is incompatible with military service. This is the first time such a policy statement would be placed into actual law. The bill also eliminates the President's authority to issue an executive order ending military discrimination against lesbians, gays, and bisexuals.

On September 9th, Senator Barbara Boxer offered an amendment to remove the policy statement and to restore the President's authority to end discrimination. Senator Boxer's amendment was defeated by a vote of 33 to 63. Both California Senators (Boxer and Feinstein) voted for the amendment. Thirty Democrats and 3 Republicans voted for the amendment while 25 Democrats and 38 Republicans voted against it. The Democratic and Republican leaders in the Senate all voted against Boxer's amendment.

On September 28th, a similar amendment was offered in the House of Representatives by Representative Meehan of Maine. This amendment would have deleted the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy from the appropriations bill and would have allowed the President to decide whether or not lesbians, gays, and bisexuals should be allowed to stay in the service. This amendment was defeated. The votes of the California Congressional delegation are shown in the table to the right, and continued on page 6. Clearly more work is needed to end the military's discriminatory policies.

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House of Representatives Vote on Meehan Amendment

Name	Party	Yea	Nay
Baker, Bill	R		x
Becerra, Xavier	D	x	
Beilenson, Anthony	D	x	
Berman, Howard	D	x	
Brown, George	D	x	
Calvert, Ken	R		x
Condit, Gary	D	x	
Cox, Christopher	R		x
Cunningham, Randy	R		x
Dellums, Ronald	D	x	
Dixon, Julian	D	x	
Dooley, Calvin	D	x	
Doolittle, John	R		x
Dorman, Robert	R		x
Dreier, David	R		x
Edwards, Don	D	x	
Eshoo, Anna	D	x	
Farr, Sam	D	x	
Fazio, Vic	D	x	
Filner, Bob	D	x	
Gallegly, Elton	R		x
Hamburg, Dan	D	x	
Harman, Jane	D	x	
Herger, Wally	R		x
Horn, Steve	R	x	
Huffington, Michael	R	x	
Hunter, Duncan	R		x
Kim, Jay	R		x
Lantos, Tom	D	x	
Lehman, Richard	D		x
Lewis, Jerry	R		x
Martinez, Mathew	D	x	
Matsui, Robert	D	x	
McCandless, Al	R		x

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Name	Party	Yea	Nay
McKeon, Howard	R		x
Miller, George	D	x	
Mineta, Norman	D	x	
Moorhead, Carlos	R		x
Packard, Ron	R		x
Pelosi, Nancy	D	x	
Pombo, Richard	R		x
Rohrabacher, Dana	R		x
Roybal-Allard, Lucille	D	x	
Royce, Edward	R		x
Schenk, Lynn	D	x	
Stark, Fortney	D	x	
Thomas, Bill	R		x
Torres, Esteban	D	x	
Tucker, Walter	D	x	
Waters, Maxine	D	x	
Waxman, Henry	D	x	
Woolsey, Lynn	D	x	

Lambda Letters Controls Costs

As of August 31st, Lambda Letters had delivered 21,681 signed letters to legislators and other public officials. During the first eight months of 1993 the project spent \$8,125.79 on supplies, postage, and other items needed to accomplish our

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Do You Know Who Your Legislators Are?

A viable democracy requires an informed electorate. If you would like the names, addresses, and phone numbers of your legislators and other elected officials, send a request along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:

The Lambda Letters Project
6212 Silverton Way
Carmichael, CA 95608

We'd be happy to furnish you with their names!

mission. As a result, the average cost came to 37 cents per letter. We think that's pretty good. We promise you that the Lambda Letters Project will continue to use your contributions prudently.

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